



The Ground Plane

South Bay
Amateur
Radio
Association
ARRL Member Club
Since 1974



Volume 2 Edition 5

May, 2001

President's Message

SBARA 2001 President—Mike AB6CV

We are currently using the Red Cross building in Union City for our SBARA meetings. I have noticed that the traffic makes the drive a bit slower. You might want to add some extra driving time to account for the traffic.

Thanks to all who helped us find a place to hold our meetings. specially I would like to thank Sid and Elise for their efforts coordinating things with the Red Cross. Although the last meeting had the topic of alternate energy sources I think we all want to get a sailboat with a tribander on it now! Wow! I can't even describe a boat that complex. (Yes, it had solar power on it too.) I think that meeting went well. I received many positive comments about it.

I would like to encourage members who are building kits to let us know what you are doing. I am going to expand the beginning of the meeting slightly to include kit builder status reports. I think it would be interesting to see what kind of wondrous projects our members might be building.

A couple of members suggested this and I think it's a great idea.

Make sure you check on your Field Day equipment. It is getting close to that time of year now.

Make sure you have your tents and bug repellent ready to go. It is a good idea to bring a tarp at least to cover your rigs from the early morning dew. (I will be sure to do that this year.) Check to see that you have rope for stringing up antennas. And for guying them down so they don't blow away.

See you at our next meeting at our new location. Remember to check our web page before the meeting if you can to make sure there haven't been any new disasters that might have changed the meeting time or place. I don't expect any, but you never know.

73,
Mike AB6CV

May Program Announcement

May 16th's SBARA Club meeting will be at our new location in Union City. We will be meeting at the American Red Cross facility located on — Mission Blvd.

The meeting's guest speaker will be—Don Amyx and his talk will cover "contesting"

See you all at 7:30PM!

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Product Review and Assembly Remarks while Building the Elecraft K2 Transceiver

By — Mike, AB6CV

After hearing Eric Swartz of Elecraft speak at our club meeting about the Elecraft Qrp rigs. I wanted to try to figure out a way to justify buying one. hihi.

A couple of main points really hit home for me. The low current drain, 150-220mA on receive and only 2.5 amps on transmit. The other point was the excellent receiver qualities, like good rejection of strong nearby signals.

This has got to be a perfect Field Day rig. Which I plan to use on Field Day this year by the way. So I ordered up a K2. It came on Friday and I had completed building it by Wednesday morning.

This is a well documented kit. I had no problems at all with the instructions. (Please keep in mind that I am an experienced kit builder.)

The resistors are on a roll in the order that you install them. I really liked that. The capacitors are not, which is too bad. Some of the capacitors are almost impossible to read the text on them. Elecraft has email tech support which I did use once to try and identify a couple of strange capacitors. I thought they read 287. Tech support says that it was 2R7. That is supposedly a 2.7 pf capacitor by the way.

Winding the toroids was fun. Striping off the insulation was not fun. But it wasn't too bad. After you do a couple you get a lot better at it.

I cleaned the boards with alcohol to remove the flux (most people don't do this I suspect). During the build process you stop at different stages in the instructions and run some simple tests. There are resistance checks that you do to make sure you are not making any short circuits as you build. Nice to find these problems early on! Don't want to smoke anything. And at certain stages you get to actually power the rig up and do some simple alignment steps. It was during one of these that I heard Cuba on the rig.

Finally I got to proceed on with the main alignment. This is so easy it's funny. They have a really wonderful computer controller running the show. It makes it pleasant.

The filters are the hardest thing to align. But if you use a computer to do it, it goes really fast. You plug the speaker output from the rig to the mic input on the computer and run a spectrum analyzer program available on the Elecraft web site. Then you

center the noise hump as needed. (this is a very brief version of what you REALLY do). You get 4 filters per mode that you can setup as you like. Pretty darn nice.

Well as you might guess by now, I like the rig. It gets out fine too. At 15 watts it is almost too easy. So I turn it down to 5 watts.

I have made about 10 contacts with the rig. No DX yet but I haven't really tried to yet. I worked a fellow in Texas who was running 5 watts to a 3 foot loop antenna. I was also running 5 watts, but to my dipole. That was just plain fun. It isn't always the distance that makes the QSO interesting it can be the situation as well.

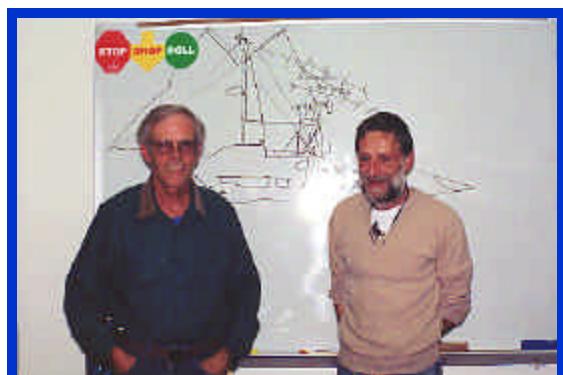
See you on the air.

73, Mike AB6CV

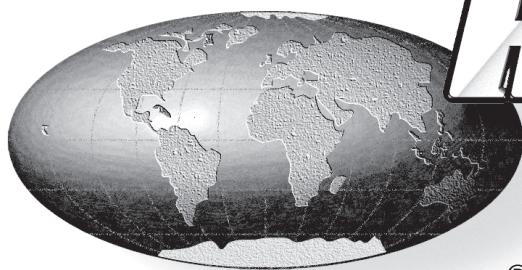
**SBARA Meeting
Programs—By Al
Rendon—WT6K**

| | | | |
|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| MAY 16 | CONTESTING | DON AMYX | SBARA MEMBER |
| JUNE 20 | ALL ABOUT FIELD DAY | ALAN KITTRELL | SBARA MEMBER |
| JULY 18 | ADVANCED T-HUNTING | SYD TO DETERMINE | TBD |

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Field Day 2001—Special Announcement

The SBARA June meeting is devoted to the plans that will be part of our Field Day operation. Lake Elizabeth is our home again this year!

Please remember to bring a "side-dish" and or a "dessert" for our Saturday Evening meal. Finally, Sunday morning helpers are needed to 'clean up' the site. Will you help?

The Ground Plane

[**http://www.qsl.net/sbara**](http://www.qsl.net/sbara)

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